



CBC Newsletter

for members of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., ornithological society of the Carolinas

Volume 47

August/September 2001

Number 4

SANTEE COOPER COUNTRY IN AUTUMN

The Carolina Bird Club fall meeting will be held in Santee, South Carolina, from Friday, September 21, through Sunday, September 23, headquartered at the Ramada-Santee, I-95, Exit 98.

Santee Cooper Country is comprised of two lakes (Marion and Moultrie), two rivers, two canals, a vast swamp, 450 miles of shoreline, 171,000 acres of land covered by 6-1/2 million gallons of water, and covers the five counties of Orangeburg, Calhoun, Sumter, Clarendon, and Berkeley. For detailed information, refer to santeecoopercountry.org.

Field trips will visit the four units of the Santee National Wildlife Refuge, Santee State Park, the Super Sod Farms and other areas in Orangeburg County, Congaree Swamp National Monument, Pointsett State Park and many other birdy places, including a two-hour pontoon boat ride on Lake Marion.

We expect to see a wide variety of birds, including shorebirds, raptors, ducks, possibly red-cockaded woodpecker, brown-headed nuthatch, Bachman's sparrow, and migrant warblers. For more detailed information on the birds to be seen, refer to Robin M. Carter's *Finding Birds in South Carolina*.

On Friday evening, Craig Sasser, a Refuge Biologist with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Services, will present an overview of the work he has done for the past four years at Santee NWR for the management of waterfowl and songbirds. On Saturday evening, John Sill, noted author and humorist, will speak.

For nonbirding, significant others there is a factory outlet mall within walking distance of the motel, featuring such names as Bass, Bugle Boy, Famous Footwear, Leggs, Hanes, Bali, Oneida, Swank and Van Heusen, to name a few. There are 288 holes of golf and you can check out the courses on the web site. Revolutionary and civil war battle sites are scattered throughout the area.

While you will not find a gourmet restaurant in Santee, there are numerous eating establishments and you are sure to find something you like from pasta, pizza, fast-food, country cooking, chicken, steaks, ribs, seafood and BBQ, to sandwiches and salads, brunches and buffets.

The Ramada-Santee is an AAA three-star motel with an outdoor swimming pool,



Essential Information

Aug. 20

Deadline for Lake Marion Boat Trip

Sept. 1

Deadline for Hotel Reservations

Tentative Schedule

Friday, Sept. 21

7 AM - 5 PM Field Trips
10 AM Registration begins at Hotel
6:30 PM Social Hour
7:30 PM Craig Sasser, Santee NWR
Biologist Speaker

Saturday, Sept. 22

7 AM - 5 PM Field Trips
6:30 PM Social Hour
7:30 PM Meeting: John Sill, author
and humorist, Speaker

Continued on page 3

Carolina Bird Club Fall Meeting Registration Form

September 21 - 23, 2001

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZI P _____

Telephone: _____ (day) _____ (evening) E-mail _____

Enclosed is a check for \$_____ for _____ member (\$10) registration(s) and/or _____ nonmember (\$20) registration(s). Please include names not listed above:

Make check payable to CBC and mail to: CBCm 11 West Jones St., Raleigh, NC 27601-1029

CBC Fall Meeting — September 21 - 23, 2001

Hotel Reservation Form

(Rooms may not be available after September 1.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone: _____ (day) _____ (evening) E-mail _____

Enclosed you will find \$_____ (\$43.20 single/\$52.20 double, plus 11% tax) as advance payment (first night) for a room reservation. We (I) will arrive _____ (date) and leave _____ (date).

Send this form with check to: Ramada-Santee, P.O. Box 501, Santee, SC 29142

Fish Eagle Tour

(Deadline for reservations August 20)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone _____ (day) _____ (evening) e-mail _____

Enclosed is my check for \$_____ for _____ boat tour reservation(s) at \$11 each. Please make my reservations for: _____ Friday, September 21, 2:30 p.m. or _____ Saturday, September 22, 7:30 a.m.

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO CAROLINA BIRD CLUB, MAIL TO: Carroll Richard, PO Box 893, Hampton, SC 29924.

CBC FALL MEETING FIELD TRIP RESERVATIONS

September 21 - 23, 2001

Please indicate which field trip(s) you wish to participate in by writing the trip number and name(s) of participants next to the day and time.

	<u>Trip #</u>	<u>Name of Participant(s)</u>
Friday All Day	_____	_____
Friday Morning	_____	_____
Friday Afternoon	_____	_____
Saturday All Day	_____	_____
Saturday Morning	_____	_____
Saturday Afternoon	_____	_____
Sunday Morning	_____	_____

Please send to form by September 5 to: Carolina Bird Club, 11 West Jones Street, Raleigh NC 27601-1029

Santee Field Trip Descriptions

Congaree National Monument - Trip 1

Meet trip leader at park headquarters. Bring lunch. This last significant stand of old-growth river bottom hardwood forest was added to the National Park System in 1976. Over 20,000 acres of forest, swamp, and adjacent uplands along the Congaree River (just southeast of Columbia) are protected. Approximately 175 species of birds have been found on the property. All eight species of woodpecker and over twenty species of warbler are possible. **Directions:** From Columbia, take Exit 5 off I-77 to Hwy 48 toward Gadsden. Follow Hwy 48 (Bluff Road to Old Bluff Road) following the signs approximately 13 miles to the park entrance. From Santee, take Hwy 6 west past Elloree, turn right on Hwy 267 to 601. Turn right on Hwy 601 north to Wateree and take the left fork onto Hwy 48 through Gadsden and follow signs to park entrance. Approximately 42 miles from Santee.

Super Sod Farm - Trips 2, 15

The main attraction here will be the rarer migrating shorebirds, such as Pectoral, Upland and Buff-breasted Sandpipers and Lesser Golden-Plover. A scope is recommended for this area. This is a twenty-minute drive from Santee.

Santee NWR [Bluff Unit] - Trips 3, 7, 11, 16

This is the best known unit of the Refuge. It offers a 1.1 mile-long nature trail through a pine plantation to an observation platform and a short boardwalk over a marsh. We will also walk through agricultural areas and along the edge of Lake Marion. A diversity of birds can be seen here, including waterfowl, waders, gulls, terns, shorebirds and land birds. The visitors' center is located here (restrooms available) and is open daily from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Santee NWR [Pine Island Unit] - Trips 4, 8, 14, 18

Present are upland areas, marsh, small ponds and an arm of Lake Marion. This is a walking trip. Expected birds will be similar to the Bluff Unit.

Santee State Park - Trips 5, 12, 17

This 74,350-acre park on the shores of Lake Marion offers good birding. We will look for a wide variety of birds, including shorebirds, raptors, brown-headed nuthatch and migrant songbirds during leisurely walks on level ground. There is a fee of \$1.50 per person, unless participant has a State Park Passport or is a S. C. Resident 65 or over.

Fish Eagle Tour - Trips 6, 13

Participants must have preregistered by August 20 for these trips. A cruise through the swamp, experiencing sights and sounds in the sunken forest of bald cypress trees. Enjoy ospreys, anhingas, herons, egrets and other water birds, as well as alligators and lake wildflowers.

Orangeburg County Tour - Trip 9

This trip will visit Edisto River Gardens, the fish hatchery and the Super Sod Farms, as well as other hot spots in the county. Expect marsh birds, migrating land birds and shorebirds.

Pointsett State Park - Trip 10

This park is located within the 23,500 Manchester State Forest. It is unique within our state in that it encompasses within a relatively small area several types of habitat. The hilly terrain that marks the park's entrance has been eroded by spring-fed creeks that have carved deep valleys into these bluffs, thus creating plant communities representative of mountain bluffs, sand hills and swamps. The trail is moderately hilly. There is a \$2 entrance fee except for State Park Passport holders and S.C. residents 65 and over. This park is approximately 35 miles from Santee.

Santee NWR: Cuddo Unit - Trip 19

This unit is closed for the last fourteen days of September for dove hunting, but we have permission to bird here on Sunday, September 23. We will bird along the Visitor Drive, looking for migrant songbirds, raptors, and a wide variety of waterbirds and shorebirds.

SANTEE FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

September 21 - 23, 2001

Except for Trip 1, Congaree NM, all trips meet in the motel parking lot. Please meet at least five minutes before departure time with a full gas tank, snacks and beverages for half-day trips and a lunch for full-day trips.

NOTE: Many of the sites to be visited are described in *Finding Birds in South Carolina* by Robin M. Carter. This book is also a good source for areas to bird on your own.

Friday, September 21

All Day

Trip 1: Congaree National Monument
[meet leader at headquarters at 8 a.m.]

Morning [7 a.m. departure]

Trip 2: Super Sod Farm
Trip 3: Santee NWR - Bluff Unit
Trip 4: Santee NWR - Pine Island Unit

Afternoon [1 p.m. departure]

Trip 5: Santee State Park
Trip 6: Fish Eagle Tour [Departs 2:30]
Preregistration required
Trip 7: Santee NWR - Bluff Unit
Trip 8: Santee NWR - Pine Island Unit

Registration does not begin until 10 a.m. on Friday. If you are signed up for the Friday all-day trip or a Friday morning trip, it is not necessary to register for the meeting prior to going on the field trip.

Saturday, September 22

All Day [7 a.m. departure]

Trip 9: Orangeburg County Tour
Trip 10: Pointsett State Park

Morning [7 a.m. departure]

Trip 11: Santee NWR: Bluff Unit
Trip 12: Santee State Park
Trip 13: Fish Eagle Tour [Departs 7:30]
Preregistration required
Trip 14: Santee NWR: Pine Island Unit

Afternoon [1 p.m. departure]

Trip 15: Super Sod Farm
Trip 16: Santee NWR: Bluff Unit
Trip 17: Santee State Park
Trip 18: Santee NWR: Pine Island Unit

Sunday, September 23

Morning [7:30 departure]

Trip 19: Santee NWR: Cuddo Unit

Fall Meeting - continued

cocktail lounge, and coffee in the rooms. Pets are allowed. The toll free number is 888-726-8337 and the local number is 803-854-2191. Single rooms are \$43.20, plus 11% tax, and doubles are \$52.20, plus tax. These rates include a hot breakfast buffet. The rates are good before and after the meeting dates, so come early or stay late and enjoy what the area has to offer. Check-in time is 2 p.m. and check-out is at noon.

When making reservations, check or credit card must secure the first night's lodging. Checks will not be accepted at checkout.

Cash or credit card must pay the balance. Identify yourself as a CBC member. A block of rooms will be held for us until **September 1, 2001**. After this date, rooms will be on a space-available basis. There is a Hampton Inn (803-854-2444) adjacent to the Ramada. Rates will be higher. Camping is available at the State Park (803-854-2444) and there are private campgrounds in the area.

We will have two, two-hour, narrated boat tours on Lake Marion, exploring the beautiful sunken cypress forests on a 38-passenger pontoon boat,

equipped with a restroom. Enjoy ospreys, anhingas, herons, egrets and other water birds, as well as alligators and wildflowers such as purple water hyacinths, yellow primrose and swamp hibiscus. One boat trip will leave from the Ramada parking lot at 2:30 p.m. on Friday, September 21, and the second trip will leave from the parking lot at 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, September 22. The cost is \$11 per person, which is nonrefundable unless the provider cancels the trip. **The deadline for signing up is August 20.** Please use the form provided in this newsletter to register.



From the Field

Scissor-tailed Flycatchers Returns

In early May a pair of scissor-tailed flycatchers showed up again on our farm south of Monroe, NC. They were first sighted on May 2, 2001. We assume this is the same pair that raised young on our farm last year. By May 8th we saw the beginning of a nest in exactly the same spot as last year, a joint of a leg in a high tension tower.

By the beginning of June the female was sitting on eggs. By mid June we saw heads of the babies. On June 24th the first baby fledged. There were four young and all successfully fledged. As of this writing (mid July), the young were growing into strong fliers and were hawk-ing insects on their own. Their tails were almost as long as their

bodies, but not yet as long as the female. They were usually seen late evening when there were lots of insects to catch.

The scissor-tails were really fun to watch, especially when the male chased off a vulture, hawk, or great blue heron. One night we watched the male land on the back of a red-tailed hawk on two occasions. The second time the ST stayed on the back of the hawk a full seven seconds. The ST did not flap his wings and it looked as if he was surfing on the back of a really annoyed hawk.

– Ann Olsen

Dickcissels Breed in the Piedmont

In a North Carolina version of the Patagonia Picnic Table Effect, Shelley Theye and Jill Froning discovered a male Dickcissel singing from power lines along a hay field on May 27 while they were on a trip to see nesting Warbling Vireos at Anilorac Farm along Dairyland Road west of Chapel Hill. A Dickcissel is just rare enough to attract attention any place in North Carolina, and because this one was easily observed from the roadside in a location where there is a high density of birders, a large number of birders enjoyed coming to see it, and participating in documenting its presence via Carolinabirds.

A female was spotted on June 10, and observed building a nest on June 13 and June 17. But beginning June 17 the male apparently vanished for 6 days. Everyone felt discouraged, but the female continued to be seen so we thought she must already be incubating. Shelley Theye contacted the owner of the field, Charles Snipes, and asked if he would leave an unmowed patch of grass around the nest site, which he was happy to agree to. Shelley and I located the nest, which contained 4 eggs, and put up a pair of post markers about 20 feet to either side of the nest so Mr. Snipes would know where not to mow.

The field was mowed toward the end of the incubation period. On one side, mowing came within 8-10 feet of the nest, but on the other three sides about 20 feet was left. The female's behavior suggested that hatching occurred on June 29, and July 7 she was seen carrying food to (unseen) fledglings well away from the nest. I returned to check the nest and found one unhatched egg, so probably 3 young were successfully fledged. It's a great success story thanks to the cooperation of Mr. Snipes, and Shelley's efforts to secure that cooperation.

– Kent Fiala



Camping at Crabtree Meadows Ridge Junction Overlook on BRP September 15-16, 2001

Leaders: Dwayne and Lori Martin

Limit: 16 participants

Cost: \$10 per person

This overnight excursion will get us up close and personal with the flora and fauna of Crabtree Meadows and Ridge Junction Overlook (part of Black Mountain Gap at milepost 355.8 on the Blue Ridge Parkway). We will meet at 3:00pm on Saturday, September 15th in the parking area of Crabtree Falls (located just behind the fee station for Crabtree Meadows Campground.). We'll explore the Crabtree Falls area for migrants such as Vireos, Warblers, Tanagers, and Orioles. We've had Black-billed Cuckoo here several times in past. So we'll definitely be on the lookout for them! Listening for chickadee-titmouse flocks will alert us to any possible migrants and we'll let them lead us as we make our way around the campground as evening falls upon us. Last year an entire flock of Turkeys made their way from the surrounding woods and into the open grassy areas all around us and fed for nearly half an hour! Common Nighthawks and Chimney Swifts will take to the air near sundown, and soon after we'll be treated to the chorus of the resident Barred Owl.

Sunday morning, we'll rise early enough to be at Ridge Junction Overlook by sunrise, usually around 7:00 AM. Nothing could be more peaceful and serene as watching the sun rise over Jonas Ridge! Common Nighthawks may still be coming through the gap when we arrive, but they'll soon be replaced by descending migrating thrushes, grosbeaks and warblers. This spot on the parkway is unique in that it is an east to west connector from the Black Mountains to the Blue Ridge Mountains. The birds tend to get "funneled" into the valley between the two chains and cross over this small stretch of the parkway because it is the lowest elevation. Some of the birds we expect to see include Tennessee, Cape May, Blackburnian, Bay-breasted and Chestnut-sided Warblers. Both Orioles, both Tanagers and loads of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks perch atop small spruces as they make their way over the gap and into the next valley.

We should find resident species of the spruce-fir forests as well including: Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Siskin, Winter Wren, Common Raven, and Golden-crowned Kinglet. It seems to be an excellent year for Red Crossbill in the area, so they shouldn't be too hard to find! As the morning wears on, the hawks begin to take to the air and we'll expect to see some raptors soar just overhead. Peregrine Falcon, Merlin and Bald Eagle have all been spotted on this weekend in years past. When the birding gets slow, we'll make our way back down the parkway to Crabtree Meadows and break camp.

Crabtree Meadows Campground is located at milepost 339.5 on the Blue Ridge Parkway. 71 tent sites and 22 trailer sites are available on a first come basis. Facilities include water, flush toilets and sinks, but no showers. A modest fee of \$12.00 per night is required. A restaurant and camp store is also available if needed.

Registration: Call Lori or Dwayne Martin at (828)459-2652 or email at dlmartin@twave.net to reserve a space and for more details. Mail your check and reservation form to CBC headquarters at the address indicated on the form.



Birds of the Carolinas

Student Research Grants

The Carolina Bird Club, Ornithological Society of the Carolinas, announces the availability of funds to support student research in avian biology. It is anticipated that up to four awards will be made to institutions in North and South Carolina to support undergraduate or graduate student research projects. The average award will be \$350.

Applications should be made through the institution with the sponsorship of a faculty member and approval of the institution's authorized signatory. It should be prepared by the student applicant and should include:

- description of the scope of the work (limited to two single-spaced pages)
- budget with justification
- biographical sketch of the student indicating course work and other activities that would indicate that the student is capable of performing the described project, and
- letter from the faculty sponsor.

Allowable costs include but are not necessarily limited to laboratory supplies and limited travel to research sites. The Carolina Bird Club does not support institutional indirect costs. A final report will be required. Significant research findings will be reviewed for possible publication in *The Chat*.

Application receipt deadline is Friday, October 5, 2001. Grant project periods will begin November 15, 2001 and final reports will be due no later than September 30, 2002. Original and three copies should be sent to:

Birds of the Carolinas Student Research Grants
Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
11 West Jones Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-1029

For more information, contact Andrea Ceselski at Andrea@spar.

Crabtree Meadows Field Trip Registration Form September 15-16, 2001

Name(s): _____
Address: _____
City: _____ St.: _____ Zip: _____
Telephone: _____ (d) _____ (w) Email: _____

Enclosed is a check for \$ _____ for _____ participants.

After verifying with the trip leaders there are spaces available, mail this form to:
Carolina Bird Club, 11 West Jones Street, Raleigh NC 27601-1029

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The CBC Newsletter is published bimonthly by Carolina Bird Club, Inc., the ornithological society of the Carolinas. CBC is a nonprofit corporation headquartered in Raleigh, NC. Founded in 1937 the membership open to anyone interested in birds, natural history and conservation. Members are encouraged to submit items of interest to the CBCNewsletter editor:

Judy Walker,
7639 Farm Gate Dr., Charlotte, NC 28215
birdwalker@mac.com

Submission deadlines are the 10th of January, March, May, July, September and November.

**Submit membership applications and
change of address to:**

CBC Headquarters Secretary

**11 W. Jones St.,
Raleigh, NC 28601-1029**

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CBC

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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Pinehurst, NC

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Charlotte, NC

Nancy Kucera
Charlotte, NC

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Thomas and Linda Morgan
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WEB SITE: www.carolinabirdclub.org